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# ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

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DECEMBER, 1852.

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## PEACE A SPECIAL WORK OF THE CHURCH.

If the Bible is true, perpetual peace will one day overspread the whole earth *as a result of the Gospel*; and it must, of course, devolve mainly on Christians as God's chosen agents in every such work, to make the application of its pacific principles necessary to secure this glorious consummation. They are as clearly bound to labor for this result as for any other that God has promised, as truly so as for the support or spread of the Gospel itself. But *how* shall they labor for it? Is there any need of special associated efforts? The result *must* be sought and secured; but how? The mass of Christians, apparently with very little inquiry into the grounds of such a conclusion, seem to suppose, that there is no need of any *special* efforts for the abolition of war; that this will follow, as a matter of course, from the general influences of Christianity without any specific application of its pacific principles for the purpose; and that all they have to do, is to support the Gospel at home, to spread it through the world, and then wait in passive expectation for peace to come as one of its incidental, ultimate results! Certainly no Christian can doubt the importance to every good cause of such efforts for the support and spread of the Gospel; but will these *alone* suffice for the world's pacification, or supersede either the desirableness or the necessity of *special* efforts for the abolition of war? Would to God the former were increased, if necessary, a hundred fold; but, even if they were, would not the exigencies of the case still demand the latter? Have we any good reason to expect, that war will be ever abolished, and peace become permanently co-extensive with Christianity, without the special, combined efforts for which we plead?

Look at the reason of the thing. No remedy ever cures disease without an application to the case; and, if the Gospel is God's grand remedy for human ills, it must of course be rightly applied for the cure of such a chronic, deep-seated, inveterate malady as war; a custom imbedded in the

worst passions of depravity, fortified by universal, immemorial usage, and wrought, the world over, not only into the frame-work of government, but into the very web and woof of society. Can ever God's own catholic cure such a social gangrene without a direct, specific application? Will such an application ever be made without special efforts for the purpose? Indeed, if it could be in the lapse of long ages, we should still deem such efforts very desirable in order to hasten that application, and thus cut short the many centuries of evil which war would otherwise inflict on Christendom itself.

So we all reason in similar cases. If you find your child addicted to lying or profaneness, you try to reform him not so much by inculcating the whole Gospel at once, an entire system of theology, as by bringing home to his conscience that portion of its truths which you deem most pertinent to his case—you make a *specific* application. So Paul preached to Felix; so Peter on the day of Pentecost; so every effective preacher of the Gospel, and every successful reformer of mankind. We marvel that it should be necessary to argue a point so plain. The doctrine is older even than Paul or Peter; it is coeval with common sense in the application of moral truth. The whole history of successful efforts for the conversion of men to God, has gone, in every age and clime, on the principle of making a direct, specific application of the Gospel; and we merely extend this principle when we insist on a similar application for the abolition of war, and the permanent reign of peace wherever Christianity itself prevails.

We might, also, appeal to the history of efforts in every department of benevolence and reform. How was the practice of private, feudal wars brought to an end? By centuries of special efforts for the purpose. How have the destitute at home been furnished with the means of grace, and the Gospel sent to so many of the heathen? How have Tracts and Bibles in such vast numbers been circulated both in Christian and pagan lands? By special, united efforts. How was the slave trade brought under the ban of all Christendom, and slavery itself abolished at length throughout the British dominions? How have the wide and fearful ravages of intemperance been checked, its waves of "liquid fire" rolled back? By the joint exertions of good men for these specific purposes. Did any of these efforts set aside or overlook the Gospel? No; they were for the most part only so many means and modes of applying it. It was in every instance the Gospel that accomplished the result, but accomplished it only by a direct application to the case. Here is all we ask for peace; and we shall be quite content if Christians will only do for this cause what they have done, or begun to do, in the several departments of benevolence and reform to which we have just referred.

These views we might enforce by the authority of many a name dear to the church, but will restrict ourselves now to a brief extract from one whose memory is embalmed in the hearts of all good men. "Much may be done," says Chalmers, "to accelerate the advent of universal and perpetual peace;

by a distinct body of men embarking their every talent, and their every acquirement, in the prosecution of this as their distinct object. This was the way in which the British public was gained over to the cause of Africa. This is the way in which some of the other prophecies of the Bible are at this moment hastening to their accomplishment; and it is in this way, I apprehend, that the prophecy of peace may be indebted, for its speedier fulfilment, to the agency of men selecting this as the assigned field on which their philanthropy shall expatiate."

Such, indeed, is the principle on which all the benevolent enterprises of the age proceed. More than thirty years ago the very class of men who started the first Tract and the first Foreign Missionary Society in this country, recommended special, combined efforts in the cause of Peace; and since that time, ecclesiastical bodies, representing all the chief denominations among us, have frequently renewed these recommendations, and pressed them upon the Christian community. We have a superabundance of authority for all we ask.

But the decisive argument for *special* efforts in this cause is found in the fact that Christianity has never, in 1800 years, abolished war in a single nation. On this point there is no need of proof; nobody can deny it; and, in view of such a fact, is it possible to doubt the necessity of special efforts for the abolition of war? Here is the argument in a nutshell: the Gospel, as hitherto preached and practised, has not in fact abolished war; and hence we are forced to one of two conclusions, either that the Gospel has really no power to do this, or that it has never yet been rightly applied for the purpose. Which horn of this dilemma will you take? We take the latter for the honor of our religion, and insist that the fault is not in the Gospel, but in ourselves; that the Gospel, if rightly applied, would just as surely do away this evil as it has others on being properly applied to them; that it *must* be thus applied to war before it will ever abolish the custom; and hence that Christians are sacredly bound to make, by special efforts for the purpose, such an application of its pacific principles as shall *actually* put an end to war in every Christian land. Can any fair mind deny the justness of this argument, or evade the obligations it imposes?

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**EMOLUMENTS TO WARRIORS.**—One of the English Military Gazettes enumerates six or eight *sinecure* military offices held by the Duke of Wellington at the time of his death, the emoluments of which would in the aggregate amount to more than \$47,000 a year! All this besides the millions on millions given to the old warrior during his career of active service; in all, it is said, more than \$10,000,000!!